



***A New Political Party
Leading UK into the 21st century***

Position Paper

Confidential - Draft

***Stop Brexit: Renew Britain
Revolutionising Opportunity for all***

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Stop Brexit: Renew Britain

Revolutionising Opportunity for All

Mission Statement

We aim to reverse Brexit and restore our influential position in Europe, allowing us to focus on what really matters in the UK. We will revolutionise opportunities for everyone, restoring people's faith in UK politics and values so we can embrace the future together with hope.

Context

The UK at the moment feels bitterly divided. Ten years of austerity and a lacklustre economy has taken its toll, revealing fissures across society – between young and old, North and South, rich and poor. These divisions reflect genuine imbalances in our society:

- A faltering economy is creating too few opportunities for young people and limiting their ability to build a stable life for themselves.
- London's economy, though an engine for growth and investment, weighs too heavily on the country, dragging talent and investment south.
- For decades, the benefits of economic growth have accrued too much to those already wealthy
- Public services, under-resourced and unfit for purpose, have come under huge and unsustainable pressure.
- Globalisation, free trade and technological developments have been positive for the country overall, but many communities have suffered the costs of globalisation without enjoying the benefits.
- Similarly, our membership of the EU has worked for some, while exposing others to pressures from immigration and EU regulation.

Immigration has changed the character of parts of Britain and been used to stoke resentment. Overall, between 1997 and 2010, 2.2 million people arrived in the UK. These immigrants have brought tremendous benefits – supporting crucial public services, bringing much needed skills and dynamism to the economy and taking on roles the UK labour market has struggled to fill. Immigration has overall benefited this country, but those benefits have not been equitably shared. Those who run businesses or work in a highly skilled job, particularly in London, have enjoyed benefits as immigration has made UK businesses more scalable and competitive. However, many people already on low wages have seen high levels of immigration coincide with sustained pressure on pay.

UK politicians have chosen to exploit these issues rather than resolve them. Bankers, the public sector, immigrants, welfare recipients, baby boomers, 'experts' and the European Union have all been targeted for blame. And with each cycle of blame, the bitterness in our public debate has got worse and our problems have gone unresolved – festering sores in our society.

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In 2016, longstanding resentment over the injustices in our society and our stuttering economy came to a head. However, the reality of Brexit will not live up to the promises of the Leave campaign. We will not be able to maintain our access to the Single Market and do our own meaningful trade deals. We will not be able to avoid EU immigration, the jurisdiction of the ECJ or payments to the EU without sacrificing our economic ties to the EU. And while this is being negotiated, Brexit is preventing the real problems and underlying causes being addressed. We will be left poorer, less equal and with fewer opportunities than if we had stayed. Worse, the people who will suffer the most will be those least able to bear the costs. Brexit will betray those who hope for most from it.

It doesn't have to be this way. It doesn't have to feel like this.

While we face huge challenges, we also have huge opportunities. We have in our history a record of solving our problems just when they seemed to be overwhelming us. Time and again, we have innovated and found unity where previously there was division. Whether it was the invention of free trade, the tank, the welfare state, the NHS, state education, insurance or the publicly traded company, innovation has consistently driven the UK forward. Where other countries have descended into recrimination, we have used our great assets to reform and rebuild – to Renew.

This is not a talent we have lost. In the summer of 2012, at the London Olympics, the UK showcased itself to the world. As we emerged from the shadow of the Global Financial Crisis we caught, for a moment, a glimpse of what this country could be. We were diverse yet united, welcoming and open to the world yet fiercely competitive and determined to succeed. We were able to acknowledge the dark elements in our history while also celebrating the triumphs and sacrifices that have held us together as a community for centuries. *This* is what we dream of when we dream of the United Kingdom.

In that summer, we proved we still possessed the assets that had allowed us to overcome adversity before:

- The dynamism created by our commitment to an individual's right to a chance to succeed, our history of great innovations in science and technology and our willingness to absorb ideas from around the world
- Our instinctive belief in supporting our fellow man and protecting the vulnerable
- Our willingness to discard conventional wisdom, while not taking authority too seriously.
- The diversity of talent, from all different origins & walks of life, united under the Union Flag

We have in our country the most open minded, international, creative and best educated young generation ever. They are full of energy, ideas, and passion. They care about the world and want to change it for the better. They see the problems we face and want to solve them. We believe we have the opportunity to heal the divisions in our society and solve the great problems we face. By harnessing our tremendous capacity for innovation and by being honest but not confrontational about our problems, we can fulfil the potential we see in the UK today.

Renew's Rationale

Why now?

- The country desperately needs effective political leadership to resolve our challenges and unite the country
- Many of today's politicians are going against their better judgement to satisfy short term interest
- The Liberal Democrats have fatally tainted their brand and stagger on as a party in limbo, unable to make a significant impact
- Legions of voters are now totally unrepresented including those who want to remain in EU and those who want responsive public services, a strong economy and sustainable public finances
- Brexit means an alternative vision is desperately needed, and needed now

Why us?

- Renew is the only party in existence, ready and able to challenge the status quo
- We have the right team and inspiring leadership to take this forward
- By bringing talented people from outside politics into the public debate and listening to people's concerns around the country, Renew will offer meaningful change from the current failed establishment
- Renew's platform will appeal to a broad swathe of the electorate - including those who voted to Remain in EU, those who did not vote; new voters; those changing their minds, and the Brexit voters who were actually angry about living standards

Our Vision

Charter

Our founding Charter is based on 4 fundamental beliefs

Renew believes in:

1. Personal responsibility and opportunity for all, including
 - national unity based on tolerance and diversity
 - Global Britain leading internationally
2. A new economic model that leaves no one behind
3. A strong economy based on innovation, regulated free markets & responsible public finances
4. National prosperity and security assured through EU membership

Our Values

Our beliefs, vision and values reflect the country we are working to create, and will define the approach we take in all we do.

Openness & Inclusivity

We are open to the world and new ideas. We welcome discussion, criticism and enquiry. We welcome support and involvement from everyone, no matter which party, grouping, or identity they hold.

Integrity

We will not let personal ambition, lack of courage or inflexible ideology prevent us doing what's best for the country.

Transparency

We speak frankly and are honest with our views and opinions. In this era of misinformation and multiple information sources, we will ensure that we share only factual information, expose lies and are transparent about our activities.

Responsibility

We recognise cause and effect and our obligation to act to care for other people in our community and around the world. We also know that contributing to regional economic stability and providing solutions to common challenges, helps our security and prosperity at home.

Sustainability

We believe in sustaining an ecological balance and avoiding the depletion of natural resources. We believe in making sure we don't pass environmental or financial problems down to future generations.

Entrepreneurialism

We believe in opportunity and that people should be able to fulfil their potential and ambition unhindered by circumstance. We believe this is best fostered by thinking differently, being willing to challenge orthodoxies and our own minds and by acting on that basis.

Positivity

We believe in putting forward a positive vision for the UK and that encouraging division and disunity will only harm the country in the long run.

Engagement

We plan to renew faith in politics and institutions by engaging more closely with people, listening to their ideas and empowering them.

Diversity

We will actively promote tolerance and equality of opportunity, and address discrimination where we see it.

Key Positions

Renew has identified vital areas to address if we want to truly renew Britain. We are devising creative bold responses to age-old problems, drawing on the latest research and expertise. Our policy development process is based on our values and an evidence-based assessment of the world.

We will launch a listening tour and roadshow around UK, where we will actively engage with voters and Renew supporters to understand, in depth, the problems they face. We will learn systematically from their real life stories as well as from evidence-based solutions, including the most effective and practical examples from around the world.

Our plan for a revolution in opportunity for all

Key Challenges: We believe the challenges we face fall into five key areas

1. A lacklustre economy

Despite strong employment levels, our economy is not delivering improvements to living standards. This is due largely to persistently poor productivity growth and to long-term economic uncertainty. This economic decline will reinforce nativism and social division; division will produce more economic decline, and a generation's future will be sacrificed to ignorance and prejudice.

2. Excessive inequalities

Inequalities between regions, wealth disparities and intergenerational inequalities are too high, excluding too many people from engaging fully in society and forcing too many to live lives burdened by debt and robbed of opportunities. While globalisation and free trade have boosted our economy and created opportunities for many, the costs and benefits have not been equitably distributed. Productivity gains achieved through technological advances have disproportionately rewarded the wealthiest in society.

3. Public services under unsustainable pressure

The decisions of past governments combined with persistent economic underperformance and the results of our societal inequalities are putting public services under unsustainable pressure. When they fail, it is the poorest and most vulnerable who suffer extraordinary hardship. This is unacceptable. They require both additional investment and reform to ensure we have properly funded, fit for purpose services on which we can all rely.

4. A damaged environment

Man-made climate change, air pollution, falling biodiversity and bacterial resistance all present significant threats to the UK and countries around the world. These are increasing health risks for many people, threatening our natural resources and damaging our natural surroundings. These issues must also be addressed at the European and international level.

5. A reduced role in the world

Britain has enjoyed substantial soft power or global influence in recent years due to active diplomacy, culture, education, and targeted aid, supported by distinctive branding and communications. However, due to Brexit, Britain is becoming less influential and this will affect its ability to project smart power. Ultimately, this threatens UK interests around the world and represents lost opportunities.

Steps to Renewal

Renew's programme focuses on addressing the underlying causes of our challenges in order to build a revitalised country full of opportunities open to everyone in our society.

1. An end to Brexit

Why?

- Brexit is the most significant drag on the UK's economic performance at the moment. The uncertainty it has created is holding back investment and preventing the UK from benefiting from a period of solid growth in the rest of the world. Today, prices are higher, growth is lower and public finances are tighter than they otherwise would have been. In short, we are already poorer, today, than we otherwise would have been. And we haven't even left yet.
- This is likely to continue. Even if Brexit brings about no catastrophic recession, it is likely to restrain UK growth persistently. As investment goes elsewhere, the UK will diminish as an economic power, our soft power will decline, and UK citizens will experience an eroding standard of living compared to other nations.
- Most importantly – Brexit will not deliver what was promised. It is becoming increasingly clear that the Boris Johnson's cake policy "pro having it and pro eating it" is not deliverable. The UK must choose between unfettered access to the Single Market and any significant shift of powers from Brussels to London. We will not be able to sustain an open border with Ireland while outside the customs union without establishing a new border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. We will not be able to spend an extra £350m a week on the NHS while maintaining agricultural subsidies for UK farmers (particularly with a weakened economy and weaker public finances). We will not be able to reduce immigration meaningfully and also ensure the economy has access to the skills it needs.
- We therefore believe Brexit will make the problems we face significantly worse, especially for those who voted Leave.

How?

- Any reversal of Brexit must come from a democratic vote by the British people
- This can be either through another referendum or through the election of Renew MPs openly committed to remaining members of the EU
- We believe that as the eventual deal takes shape, rising public concern will increase pressure on MPs and Government, who will realise they will be held accountable for the result
- At that point, the only way for them to justify supporting the deal will be through another democratic mandate – an election or referendum. Not to seek one would deprive the UK electorate of the opportunity to avoid the Brexit calamity once they know more.
- Renew exists to fight and to win that election or referendum.
- As we pivot back to EU, we will repair our relations and fashion a new role for Britain in Europe. We will also contribute to a new reinvigorated EU vision that responds to key concerns of populations across Europe including inequality, immigration and globalisation.

2. Sustainable and equitable economic growth

We must generate growth by making the UK, and particularly regions outside London, the best place in the world to invest in and start a business

Why?

- Economic growth is the force that has lifted more people out of poverty than any other. We believe that a strong economy is the engine that drives the creation of opportunities for everyone – new, better jobs, new industries, higher wages and better conditions.
- However, that growth must be sustainable, both environmentally and economically.
- Business has been the engine of growth throughout history. But this must be in partnership with government, to ensure the best possible allocation of capital.
- Those who have argued that the market can be relied on to provide everything at the right price have been proved wrong. Markets fail. And government must be there both to minimise the frequency with which this happens and to mitigate its consequences.

How?

- Heavy investment in infrastructure outside London to build a more integrated regional economy that can rival London (e.g. refocus HS2 on connecting Northern cities to each other, rather than linking them to London)
- Invest in science, technology and low carbon industries. The UK has excelled at generating the ideas underpinning industries, but too often has failed to capitalise on these by failing to invest sufficiently in them.
- We believe investment in green energy is fundamental to our future prosperity and protection of resources, environment and health. Clean renewable energy, supported by new technologies, will be a key growth industry and a bulwark against one of the greatest threats to the UK and world economy in the 21st Century – climate change.
- Investment in technology: today's fourth industrial revolution is fusing the physical, digital and biological worlds. We mean to be part of this revolution and be the world's innovation superpower. We will invest in infrastructure and research labs in vital technologies, such as batteries, biotechnology and artificial intelligence.
- Establish a UK Investment Bank to take equity stakes in UK businesses and incentivise investment, with a focus on green technologies and investment outside London
- A meaningful minimum wage, rigorously enforced. We believe business should have access to talent from around the world but relying on low cost labour from abroad is economically damaging and unsustainable. We will not tolerate the UK's openness being exploited by unscrupulous employers competing unfairly.
- Explore reforming welfare to ensure no one is left behind by globalisation. We will investigate the introduction of a Universal Basic Income or similar model, informed by data from pilot schemes being launched around the world.
- Maintain sustainable public finances through limited tax rises (e.g. abandoning or reversing cuts to Corporation Tax to 17%), targeting steady and consistent falls in the ratio of debt to GDP through keeping deficits lower than economic growth. However, we do not believe running a surplus is, at this stage, necessary.
- Increase house building to ensure housing is affordable for all and remove a significant distortion – the disproportionate weight applied to investment in housing. We must end the housing crisis by aggressively building homes, for example, on brownfield sites. We must also

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ensure new homes are occupied, rather than held as a global store of value. We will explore taxation and other measures to encourage these homes to be occupied.

- Immigration is important to the economy but also a legitimate concern for many. Better managed immigration will ensure we maintain the benefits of free movement, while mitigating impacts on wages, public services and community integration. This can include implementing existing EU rules such as repatriation of those who have not found work in a reasonable time frame. Counteracting inflammatory media coverage and negative stereotypes will also play a role
- Make the UK the destination of choice for overseas talent – remove international students from calculations of net migration and make it easier for them to find employment in the UK after graduation, reduce the cost for businesses of employing people on Tier 2 visas and for entrepreneurs and investors on Tier 1 visas.

3. Investment and reform in key public services

Why?

- The last decade has placed many public services under unsustainable pressure. In turn, this has forced many services into a downward spiral of short term firefighting at the expense of long term solutions (e.g. the NHS' expanding use of very expensive agency / locum staff because budgets have not allowed sustainable staffing levels; or the Prison Service's restrictions on rehabilitative services to maintain order with fewer staff, even though this increases the burden on the Service in the future).

How?

- Use the dividend from cancelling Brexit to improve funding of public services
- Target initial funding at major investment programmes rather than increases in current costs, but recognise the damage done by the imposition of public sector pay caps for so long.
- NHS: We believe the NHS requires significant additional spending. However, funding alone will not establish a sustainable, high quality service free at the point of delivery. Significant reform is required – and not just of the NHS. Too often, the NHS bears the cost of failures elsewhere – such as social care or criminal justice. We will review health and social care provision from the ground up.
- Defence & Security: We will improve funding for the armed services, providing resources, training and equipment in order to keep the country safe from threats such as terrorism and cyber-attacks, and contribute to international peace and security.

4. New approach to education and training

Deliver a higher skilled, more flexible workforce better able to respond to globalisation, by providing more opportunities to young people leaving school, relieving some of the burden of tuition fees and supporting lifelong learning and skills training for adults.

Why?

- Globalisation and the development of new technologies create phenomenal opportunities, but also put unprecedented strains on the workforce.
- In the 21st century, the ability to adapt will be the only long-term competitive advantage. We must build a workforce with the skills, resilience and flexibility to enable them to do that.

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- Tuition fees have failed to create a functioning market in higher education – there is too little to gain from a university charging anything other than the maximum. As a result, tuition fees are just a heavy tax levied in the most imposing manner – by calling it debt.

How?

- Renew’s plan encompasses three elements: increasing higher education’s usefulness in the workforce; expanding the range of opportunities open to people after leaving school and introducing ways for young people to reduce the tuition fees they are charged
- We would incentivise employers and universities to create new degrees combining academic training with the opportunity to work and earn
- We would create schemes encouraging students to delay university (e.g. by offering tuition fee discounts for doing so or by offering employers NIC discounts for employing people before higher education), giving them an opportunity to work, evaluate whether further study would really drive their career forward and develop a clearer picture of what kind of study would best suit them
- Create schemes offering significant tuition fee discounts in exchange for spending time in public service (e.g. as a police officer, teaching assistant or in the military)
- We will also consider providing tuition fee discounts to encourage students to study for degrees in acutely needed skills.
- We will suggest courses in civic education, the role of international organisations and media literacy into school curriculums to immunise people from disinformation, encourage critical thinking and plug vital knowledge gaps.

Renewing UK identity and place in the world

Britain in Europe is Global Britain. The UK has long been a global player in world affairs, enhanced by our influential position in Europe. We now face a historic turning point that could see us unravel 40 years of development, both internally and externally and deprive all our citizens of great opportunity. Our future and legacy are at stake - Renew will lead the charge to ensure we safeguard the interests of the entire nation. We know that we cannot retreat into isolation and must be at the heart of international decision-making, so that we can pragmatically address our own interests and contribute to the common good. But we can only fully resume our role as a strong and reliable European and international partner once we have addressed our internal crisis. And we are not the only ones - other nations and Europe as a whole must address profound questions on the way ahead.

The UK has never truly lost its sovereignty nor core identity, but there are widespread perceptions across the country that these are under threat. Renew will find creative ways to engage with people on complex issues like immigration, globalisation and the mutual benefits of our regional and international relationships. This means, fundamentally, we must listen and communicate.

The Way Ahead

Renew’s core strategies and positions will help frame ongoing policy development throughout the coming year, as we draw in the public’s views and consult with experts on the ground and overseas. Through this national dialogue, we will learn to better engage with the nation and renew faith in politics and leadership. By rediscovering values of democracy, tolerance, diversity and community, supported by concrete policies to address core grievances, we can knit back together what has been fractured, and renew Britain’s hope and unity.